Proposal for privatising tlie FACT Udyogamandal, Kerala

4140. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government initiated any proposal to privatise the FACT Udyogamandal, Kerala;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have received representations from Trade Unions against the privatisation; and

(d) if so, the reactions thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (DR. A.K. PATEL): (a) and (b) The disinvestment Commission has recommended the initial disinvestment of a minimum of 51% of equity in Fertilizers and Chemicals Travancore Limited (FACT) in favour of a strategic buyer along with transfer of management control.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The decision of the Government on the recommendations of the Commission will be taken keeping all aspects in view.

Red Sanders wood in the list of Endangered Species

4141. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Andhra Pradesh Government has requested not to allow export of any commodities using Red Saiiders Wood without their clearance in view of its inclusion in the list of endangered species; and

(b) if so, the steps taken in regard to save ecological damage by extinction of this valuable species?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The steps taken by the Government to save ecological damage by extinction of Red Sanders &re a& under:

(i) Complete ban on felling of Red Sanders species in natural stands;

(ii) Export of Red Sanders has been included in the Negative List of Exports since 1992 under the Export and Import Policy. However, ValOe added items of Red Sanders Wood are allowed foi** export since 1996, in view of huge accummulation of stocks, subject to certain conditions including legal procurement certificate issued by Principal Chief Conservator of Forests from where the stocks are procured.

(iii) Red Sanders are included in the Appendix-II of the Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora (CITES). As a result of this, only legally procured consignments can be allowed for export.

(iv) Number of check-posts have been established and Forest Protection Force, equipped with wireless network, are deployed at strategic locations for protection of Red Sanders forests from illicit fellings.

(v) Cooperation of people in protection and management Of forests through Joint Forest Management practices.

Integrated Lake Development Programme

4142. SHRI BHAGABAN MAJHI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS fee pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the growing siltation *A* the major lakes in the country;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to implement any Integrated Lake Development Programme; and

(c) if so, the lake-wise situation at present and de\ ilopmental measures proposed to be adopted in the Ninth Five Year Plan or in the current year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) A National Lake Conservation Plan tovering the following ten polluted urban lakes of the country has been formulated at an estimated cost of Rs. 637 crore. However, the scheme has not been approved by Government so far.

Name of the Lake	State	Estimated Cost (Rs. in crores)
Dal Lake	Janmiu & Kashmir	297.90
Rabihdra Sarovar	West Bengal	2.13
Sukhna	Chandigarh	44.38
Sagar	Madhya Pradesh	4.41
Nainital	Uttar Pradesh	46.36
Kodai Kanal	Tamil Nadu	19.29
Ooty	Tamil Nadu	26.64
Udaipur	Rajasthan	148.99
Powai	Maharashtra	31.02
Hussain Sagar	Andhra Pradesh	15.34
TOTAL		636.46

Say Rs. 637 crore.

Pollution threat to Taj

4143. DR. D. VENKATESHWAR RAO: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Taj continues to be threatened on account of polluting units despite Supreme Court Order against the polluting units;

(b) the steps taken to protect marbles of the Taj against corrosion; and

(c) the measures taken to maintain the ambient air quality in Agra?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) No, Sir. The ambient levels of sulphur dioxides and oxides of nitrogen have reduced and are within the prescribed standards.

(b) and (c) The studies have indicated that there is no sign of corrosion of marble due to pollution. The steps taken to protect the Taj Mahal due to pollution and corrosion include the following:

(i) A trapezium surrounding the Taj Mahal has been demarcated where no new polluting industr> or expansion of the existing ones is allowed in the area.

(ii) A network of ambient air quality monitoring stations has been set up and being operated in Agra.

(iii) The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has initiated as ten point programme aimed at reducing air pollution in the Taj Trapezium by providing cleaner-fuels to the users.

(iv) A Special Cell has been set u for overseeing the development of green-belt around the Taj Mahal.

(v) A Mission Management Board (MMB) has been constituted by the State Govt, of Uttar Pradesh for overseeing the implementation of the various programme&'schemes formulated for the protection of the Taj Mahal.

(vi) The Archaeological Survey of India is involved in the maintenance and upkeep of the Taj Mahal.